EVERY WEEK SINCE 1865

CONVENTION DIARY: R. T. McKENZIE

THE Nation

AUGUST 25, 1956
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TRIUMPH OF MODERATION

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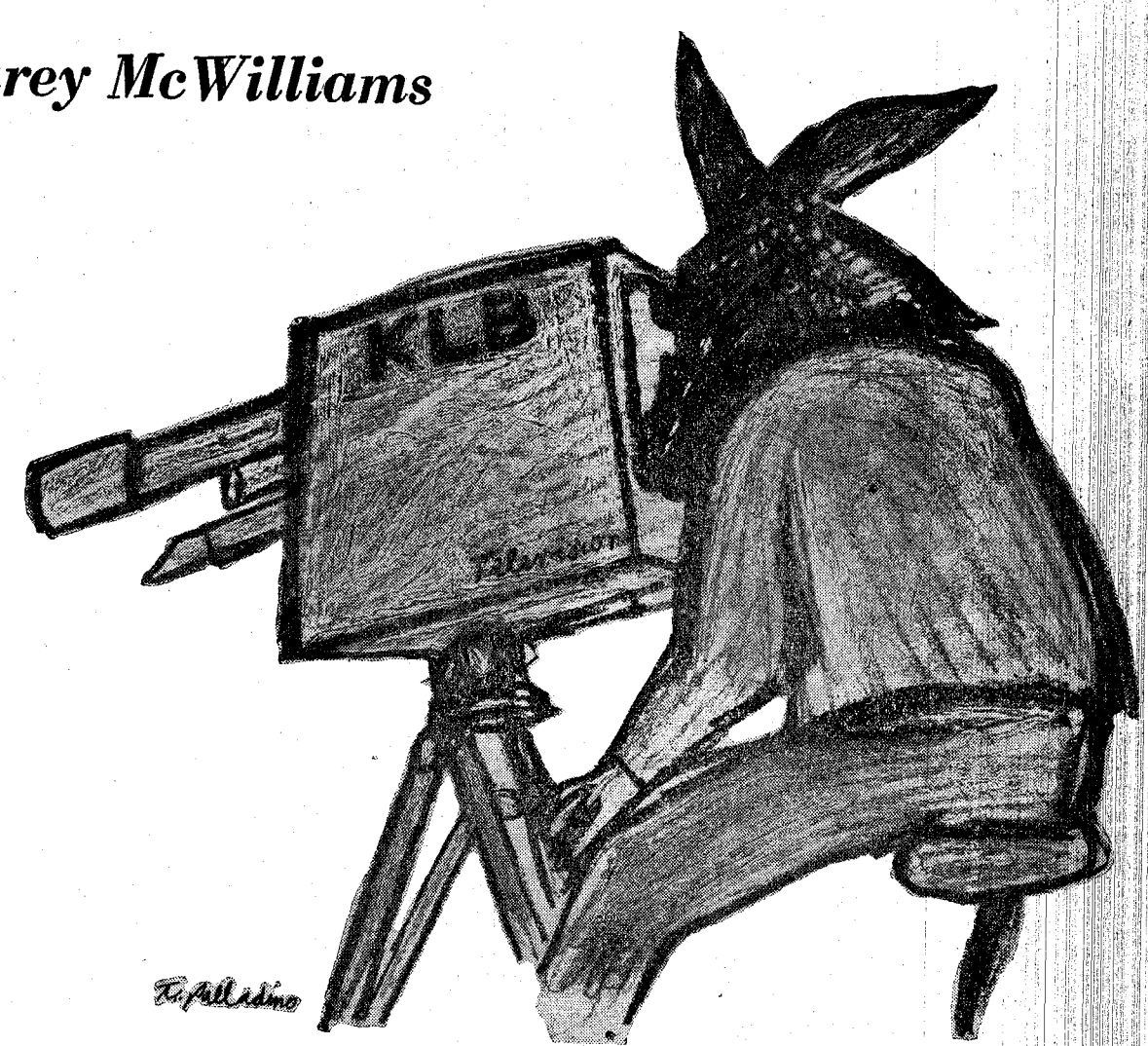
by Carey McWilliams



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A COMMUNICATION

THE AUTHOR of this letter, Joseph R. Starobin, was for twelve years prior to 1954 *foreign editor of the* Daily Worker. *He is the author of* Paris to Peking.

GEORGE BENJAMIN'S call upon "Americans of every shade of progressive, liberal and radical opinion to find some common meeting ground" is the most challenging aspect of his letter in the July 28 *Nation.* I find his estimate of the Communist Party's impact on the 2,000,000 Americans who came in contact with it rather unreal and excessive, but let us resist the temptation to go into all that. His real difficulty is that, by making a new movement for democratic socialism so heavily contingent on an act of self-dissolution by the American Communist Party, Mr. Benjamin greatly oversimplifies the dilemmas of both the Communists and the larger world of non-Communist opinion.

It is clear that the American Communists do not have what it takes to generate a Socialist revival. They are the victims of history's uneven development. In part, they are the honorable casualties of a fierce assault, and in a sense, they disabled themselves by trying to meet this assault with a mistaken analysis of their own country and the post-war world; this in turn was shaped by how the party was formed and the premises on which it functioned, even in its best days. This state of affairs is increasingly recognized, judging by the letters and columns of the *Daily Worker.* There is now a considerable body of Americans of a Marxist outlook, larger than the party's present ranks, who came to such conclusions over many years. In my own case, long-developing differences of view came to a head shortly after I returned from abroad some three years back, and I did not resume activity or membership.

The American Communists need to be superseded. A proposal for dissolution, especially from the outside, is not likely to take priority over an inner-party struggle for a clearer understanding of what went wrong.

The Soviet Twentieth Congress stimulated this long-suppressed process. It also served as a mirror, revealing that the party is rather more heterogeneous, both as regards leadership and rank and file, than its own self-portrait would have it, or than others have realized.

The larger part of the Communist leadership invested its political capital in a hysterical rejection of both the good and the bad in the policies of its former general secretary, Earl Browder. In the years following (ten years ago by now!) these leaders seriously believed that economic crisis, domestic fascism and a world Armageddon were the probable outcome of the great polarization of world relations. They led the entire movement, including trade unions and personalities under their influence, to behave accordingly. Many now realize that the whole perspective was faulty, but they appear to be impotent to put their ideas into practice. Old habits are not easily broken. For example, the elementary step of telling the truth about what happened at the national committee meeting late in April—the first full session in five years—was not taken. It has been left to the New York *Post* for July 22 to offer some light.

Many thousands of rank-and-file members have been cut off from the country's productive process; part of this is no fault of their own, part of it flows from a concept of Socialist behavior which gloried in making as many enemies as possible as simultaneously as possible. Some of these people are aging, and they subsist on loyalties and memories which are not easily dissolved. There is a substantial group, however, perhaps several thousands more, which had begun to come to terms with themselves and with realities quite a while before last February, sometimes using those passages of contradictory party policies which suited them. These people work in plants and mills, on farms and in professional life, and belong to community organizations; they have already begun to take a modest part in all sorts of good causes, or, in Mr. Benjamin's words "re-educate themselves for a constructive role in a new radical movement." Among them are many of the trade-union circles, influenced by the party. To them, leadership had long lost authority, and its failure to seize the opportunities of recent months is proof of incompetence.

Thus, whereas the party as a whole has only begun to separate the wheat from the chaff of its own history, these people continue as a kernel that cannot be dismissed. Mr. Benjamin does not grasp their dilemma. They cannot alter the party as such, neither can they dis-

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THE Nation
EVERY WEEK SINCE 1865

Moderation Triumphs . . *by Carey McWilliams*

Chicago, August 17

MODERATION scored a stunning triumph here with the massive first-ballot nomination of Adlai Stevenson, its champion, for the Presidency. But it is merely one of the paradoxes of this convention that moderation's victory spells irretrievable defeat for the old-guard, courthouse branch of the Democratic Party. Any doubt about this was sealed with the nomination, in an open "under-the-lights" convention, of Senator Kefauver for Vice President. Kefauver not only added to Stevenson's triumph, but gave it an extra and creative dimension. His strategic and timely withdrawal from the Presidential race made possible an unfettered victory for Mr. Stevenson. Consequently, the Presidential nominee now has a magnificant opportunity to liberate the Democratic Party from its partial bondage, in this post-Roosevelt era, to Southern racism, branch-water-and-bourbon Misssouri bossism and undiluted Lyndon Johnsonism.

With Kefauver's nomination, moderation's triumph has been given a plus—and the GOP a direct challenge.

Moderation's minus is plainest in the civil-rights plank. On this issue the party of Jefferson, Jackson, Wilson and Roosevelt screws up its courage to admit that Supreme Court decisions are "part" of the law of the land, but cannot bring itself to say that they should be enforced. The key sentence in this masterpiece of equivocation—"we reject all proposals for the use of force" etc.—is publicly presented as a condemnation of extra-legal violence but privately touted as an assurance that "troops and bayonets" will not be used to enforce desegregation. This sham plan, characterized by the Hearst press as a theft of Negro rights, is glorified as the "best ever." Such are the fruits of moderation.

From the outset the convention's problem was to moderate and contain the civil-rights issue. This turned out to be ludicrously easy. First off, a fine collection of word jugglers, including five signers of the Dixiecrat manifesto but not a single representative of organized labor, was named to the important drafting subcommittee. The civil-rights plank was actually drafted almost two weeks ago, yet the delegates and the public were told that a battle royal was going on behind locked doors. In point of fact, the plank was written by former Governor John S. Battle of Virginia, Senator Ervin of North Carolina, Vann M. Kennedy of Texas, Repre-

sentative Brooks Hays and Governor James Coleman of Mississippi after former Governor Paul A. Devers of Massachusetts had explained the minimum needed to avoid a floor fight. At the open hearings, the Dixiecrats refrained from questioning witnesses, but one Southern lady was heard to mutter that she could "just choke" Roy Wilkins, executive director of the NAACP.

Then this ludicrous document was pushed through the convention by steam-roller tactics with only a sham debate. The proponents were not Southerners—the Dixiecrats maintained a tactical silence—but such stalwarts of the Fair Deal as Paul Devers, Senator O'Mahoney and Representative McCormack. But not without an important assist from that "fighting" liberal, Little Ole Harry Truman, who turned out to be about

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the most moderate Democrat at this convention dedicated to moderation. And as the former President helped the Congressional leadership of the party put over the hoax—after an hour's delay to send as many listeners as possible to sleep—the Averell Harriman forces, who had been sharpshooting at "moderation," maintained a remarkable silence.

Moderation also triumphed on the "Left." The civil-rights rebels—mostly from Illinois, California, Michigan, New York and Pennsylvania, Republicans please note—found it impossible, so they said, to find out what was happening behind those carefully guarded doors where the subcommittee was at work. On late Wednesday afternoon, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights held a packed session at the Congress Hotel and listened to "fiery" speeches by Walter Reuther and Jim Carey; but by then, of course, it was too late to organize a fight and there was little will to wage one. A week's barrage of leaks and stories about "hard in-fighting" behind "locked doors" had created the impression that the great issue of human rights for Southern Negroes simply turned on two words: "Supreme Court." In short, the issue was made to appear as a problem in semantics. No clear-cut alternative was projected before the public. And, of course, the real power behind the scenes—who provided the assurance that Negroes would not revolt—was Representative William Dawson, who is forever telling Negroes "don't get mad, get smart." The minority report was, in truth, a very moderate document, so moderate indeed that there was actually some substance to the opposition argument that the civil-rights proponents were quibbling over words. The key statements in support of the minority report, those by Governor Williams and Senator Douglas, were strictly pro forma, made only for the record. The "liberals" did not need to act in this craven fashion. Even the Republicans, nowadays, are for civil rights and Stevenson's nomination was ensured in any case. Yet the issue which, in a desperate moment, the Democrats met with courage in 1948, they fled in terror in 1956. But, then, there was a "Left" opposition in 1948; there is none today.

YET THE paradox of this convention is that the civil-rights proponents retreated at a time when the Dixiecrats were obviously on the defensive. The Dixiecrat strength was much less here than in 1948 and 1952. This year the Dixiecrats were not threatening to bolt; they, too, were "moderates." The old Dixiecrat squeeze-play—create a deadlock and then trot forth a border-state compromise candidate—failed to work. And the South was worried here. The 1948 bolt saw four states with thirty-seven electoral votes desert the Democratic Party. In 1952 the Republican Party captured four Southern states with fifty-seven electoral votes and rolled up an impressive percentage of the popular vote in the South. In the meantime, the Supreme Court's desegregation decision has created a new situation. The Southern Democrats, in order to retain their committee chairmanships and a Congressional veto power on civil rights, recognize that the Democratic Party must win nationally and are well aware of what this implies. But they are haunted by two fears: one, that the White Citizens Council may outflank them on the racial issue by entering rival candidates in Democratic primaries or launching a protest movement; and, two, that the Republican Party may become a real political force in Southern politics. In short, their political careers are at stake. The recent eleven-state conference at Atlanta (August 1-2) was not called to organize a bolt at this convention but to prevent one. At Atlanta, one Dixiecrat said: "If anybody starts talking bolt at this caucus, I'll bolt right out of it." Hence there was no real danger of a bolt here; a strong, honest civil-rights plank could have been adopted without dividing the party. But this is another axiom of moderation: never call a bluff.

YET IT IS one of the major paradoxes of this convention that the delegates, despite this shameful performance, feel cheerful, confident and hopeful. There are few delegates here who, in private conversation, expect the Democrats to win in November. Even those who speak of victory are careful to hedge their predictions with numerous conditions. But most of them feel confident about the party—about its future—and for this there is some warrant. One reason, of course, is that the specter of a Dixiecrat bolt has largely vanished. The Democratic Party is maturing and levelling out as a truly national party. The Dixiecrats are still about; they got what they wanted; but their power is not what it was.

Another reason for the good feeling about the party which prevails here—as distinguished from its prospects—is that it has managed to shake off, to some extent, the burden of Trumanism. The former President came a cropper with his attempt to put over the absurd candidacy of Governor Harriman. The most satisfactory answer to the question, "Why did he do it?" is that he struck at Stevenson to get Kefauver. Nothing that has happened here has added more strength to Stevenson than Truman's open endorsement of Harriman. Not only did Mr. Truman misjudge the situation but he was given an elegant public spanking by Mrs. Roosevelt and leaves Chicago with a permanently deflated reputation. No longer the "hero of 1948," he is the little man he always was. This is a net gain in terms of Democratic self-knowledge. With the collapse of the Truman-Harriman blitz, the power of such backroom hacks as Frank McKinney, William Boyle and Frank McHale, and of such fund-raisers as Ed Pauley, is seriously undercut.

Both developments—the decline in the relative power of the Dixiecrats and of the Trumanites—are indicative

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of a larger shift in power that is taking place in the Democratic Party. The shift is from old to new, from "old" pros to "new" pros, from old-style labor and minority representatives to new style, from the courthouse branch of the party to the uptown branch, from the Truman type to the Stevenson type. It is more a difference in background, manners, style and attitudes than of ideologies; basically it is an old-new dichotomy —a difference in temperament. The division is between the flashy dressers and the boys with the casual air; between the back-slappers and the flashing smile; between the joke and the wisecrack. It is the traders and operators versus the eggheads and the smarter bosses. For the "modern" Democrats still have their bosses. After all, such stalwart Stevenson supporters as Colonel Jake Arvey, Mayor Richard Daley, Matt McCloskey, Jim Finnegan and Dave Lawrence are not amateurs. On the other hand, they do have a "modern" point of view about politics; they have some respect, that is, for the intelligence of the American electorate. The Cook County machine made Adlai Stevenson's career possible and the Pennsylvania bosses have had the good sense to back some fine candidates: Governor George Leader, Mayor Richardson Dilworth and, above all, Joseph Clark, the party's nominee for the Senate. The Democrats have a right to be pleased with the new talent which includes such figures, in addition to those named, as Governor Mennen Williams, Governor Robert Meyner, Governor Ribicoff, Senator Kennedy and other attractive political talents. Without exception, these new leadership elements are in the Stevenson camp.

BUT THE shift that is taking place between old and new creates special opportunities for maneuver for such gifted compromisers as Senator Lyndon Johnson, Representative McCormack and the indestructible Sam Rayburn. These men have a fine intuitive understanding of how to manipulate the "liberal" mind. In addition, the relative power of Texas is increasing, as the power of the South is decreasing. The old pros, the Trumanites and the Dixiecrats are still around in sufficient number so that a middleman or broker can still make an honest living. The Congressional leadership, which makes up this middle group, assumes that the party's nominees will not win in November; they merely want to control the party. Senator Johnson, from the outset, was fighting for three things: his nominee, James H. Rowe, Jr., as chairman of the Democratic National Committee; a bland civil-rights plank to be adopted without a floor fight, and some Vice Presidential nominee other than Kefauver.

If the Democratic Party is shaping up, if it is, as I believe, overcoming some ancient fears and weaknesses, the transition is by no means complete. There are new faces here but no new ideas. There are lots of "new visionaries" but little vision. Governor Frank Clement's "rant-and-holler" performance was old-fashioned to the point of quaintness. It reflects the world as seen from a window in Nashville by a young man of more bounce than brains. There are some new type Negro leaders around but the real power is still with Representative Dawson. There are some new type labor leaders about, too, but they had little power in this convention. There has been about the proceedings a noticeable staleness and mustiness; the old slogans and formulas are painfully tedious. The speech by Senator Morse, for example, was an excruciating exercise in the repetition of old clichés. Content-wise, Chicago represents a triumph of moderation.

THE OTHER day Mrs. Roosevelt—easily the most impressive person here, the youngest in ideas by several decades and the ablest politician in evidence—invested the word "moderation" with a meaning that helps to explain what is happening to the Democratic Party. "What moderation really means," she said, "is that you face all the realities of a situation; you study your situation, you analyze it." Implied is a realization that today's problems cannot be solved with yesterday's slogans and programs. In fact, today's problems have not yet been accurately defined. Of all problems, of course, this theory of moderation is least applicable to civil rights; but it is applicable to many other issues. What is also implied is that we know enough about today's problems to be disenchanted with formula solutions but not enough to be able to project the new institutions, ideas and instrumentalities with the aid of which these problems might be tackled. What is lacking, above all, is a new dynamic; some concept that would be sufficiently attractive to offset the prevailing—and very sticky—complacency. In this sense, Stevensonian moderation is a welcome replacement for the snap-judgment, off-the-cuff pronouncements of the Man from Independence; but it will never carry us very far. Caution and wisdom should go with power; but the other side of this coin is that the soliloquy—"to act or not to act," "to dare or not to dare,"—is a form that belongs to the study or stage, not to the political arena. Moderation has triumphed at Chicago, but in a world of revolutionary ferment and great technological change, moderation has little meaning except, perhaps, as a temporary stop gap for outmoded programs and thread-bare ideologies.

As power shifts from old to new in the Democratic Party, as the party begins to cast aside some of its heavier burdens and more antique fears, it will increasingly assume the form and structure of a national party rather than an improbable device by which a set of warring party chieftains have been able to maintain a precarious alliance by keeping up the pretense that their differences didn't really matter. A party is gradually replacing a coalition. But for the time being, it's only program is "moderation."

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CONVENTION DIARY

A Britisher's Very Dim View . . by R. T. McKENZIE

Chicago, August 17

"I AM not very fond of conventions," said Mrs. Roosevelt in a TV interview in Chicago. "It seems to be pretty much a pageant, too much hullabaloo, not enough serious thinking. It is an American institution, all right, but I'm not sure it's one of our better ones."

The matriarch of the Democratic Party leaves even the friendliest foreign observer little to add by way of general comment. I enjoyed my first distant enchantment with the American convention system when, aged fifteen, I followed the 1932 conventions with avid interest; this, I decided, was a spectacle I must someday see. Now, twenty-four years and six conventions later, my wish is fulfilled. I am not disillusioned, everything is exactly as I had expected. But I am disenchanted.

By a process of empathy I have been able to share the excitement of the delegates and the myriad political experts over the gladiatorial contest for the Presidential nomination. But need this absurdly over-dramatized personal contest overshadow so completely the discussion of issues? One is bound to ask this question as one jogs along the Chicago "El," with trainloads of festooned delegates, through slums very nearly as degrading as any to be seen in Europe.

It would be more fun if one were still fifteen, especially since so much of the oratory during the first three days of the convention appeared to be directed to an audience with some such mental age. There would also be less ground for concern if this were still the United States of the twenties; but a great depression, a world war and many nuclear explosions later, with America cast now in the role of leader of the free world, there is something almost intolerably frivolous about the convention high-jinks of Chicago, 1956. It is rather like watching the antics of an aging middle-aged bore who has inherited serious industrial responsibilities from his wealthy parents, but prefers to play practical jokes rather than to tend to the obligations of his patrimony.

* * *

FOR one who has spent a dozen years studying the natural history of British and European parties, the prodigal time-wasting of the early days of the convention provides the initial shock. To pitch the argument on a no more exalted plane, why were three days of free time on the national TV and radio networks given to exhortations so dreary and repetitive that they drove out of the convention hall most of the delegates, the public and the press?

The hearings of the Committee on Resolutions and Platforms were easily the most impressive aspect of the convention. One by one the representatives of most of the great interest groups of the nation presented reasoned arguments for including one plank or another in the party platform. Is there any reason why this committee should not have begun its hearings a month or more (rather than a week) before the opening of the convention? Its recommendations could then have been presented in a reasonably systematic way during the first three days of the convention. This would have provided a far more effective opportunity to demonstrate what the Democratic Party stands for to the great TV audience.

It will not suffice to argue in reply that the Democratic convention is too large to permit serious discussion. Of course it is. But the *annual* conference of the British Conservative Party is much larger and that of the Labor Party is almost as large; nevertheless both parties manage for a week each year to conduct wide-range discussions which contribute to the enlightenment of the party leaders, the conference delegates and the public. And they do this without, in any serious way, threatening the necessary freedom of action of the party leaders in Parliament. This annual dialogue between party leaders and their followers helps to account for the greater maturity of political discussion across the Atlantic.

* * *

IT WAS not until almost one A. M. on the fourth day of the Democratic National Convention that the first serious item of business was discussed. With the presentation of the minority report of the resolutions committee, the convention came alive. For a glorious half-hour the convention was worthy of the attention of serious men and women as it discussed an issue which is profoundly relevant to the future of the Republic. One groaned, at first, to think that much of the American population had probably switched off their TV sets and gone to bed. But as the debate developed, it was difficult not to conclude, on second thought, that it was better so. Although the result (a victory for the moderates) was a foregone conclusion, the ground-rules applied to the debate made utter nonsense of the most elementary principles of rational discussion. Three whole days of convention time had already been wantonly wasted; yet no more than thirty minutes could be allotted to ten speakers (including one ex-President, three Senators, three Representatives and one governor) to discuss the most important domestic issue facing the United States at the present time.

And further: the allocation of time as between the contesting teams of speakers was outrageously unfair (even if, as I am quite prepared to believe, it may have conformed to

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the standing orders of the convention). Representative McCormack announced that, out of the generosity of his heart, he would "yield" ten minutes of the thirty to the spokesman for the minority report, retaining twenty minutes for himself and his supporters. At the end of these indecent proceedings the debate was throttled; according to Senator Lehman, even the microphone of the New York delegation was suddenly and inexplicably shut off. Clearly it was better for the prestige of the democratic idea that these events should have occurred in the dead of night.

* * *

It would be unkind to dwell on Mr. Truman's role in these proceedings. Whether one's sympathies were with the majority or the minority report on the civil-rights plank does not matter. For me, at least, Truman long ago ensured his place in the distinguished second rank just behind the half-dozen immortals among the American Presidents. It was therefore acutely embarrassing first, to hear him at his press conference denounce Adlai Stevenson as a detestable apostle of moderation, and then, fifteen hours later (after Stevenson's victory had everywhere been conceded), to witness the same Harry Truman climb on the bandwagon of "moderation." It has often been remarked that when great men clash, great principles may be illuminated; but, inescapably, one must conclude that when Harry Truman picked his fight with Adlai Stevenson at Chicago in August, 1956, this did not happen.

* * *

LISTENING to the Democrats trying to build up a head of steam for this year's campaign, I was struck by the similarity between this election and the last British election of May, 1955. On that occasion, the British Conservatives went to the country after four years in office. Strictly speaking, this was the first Conservative government since 1924-29; or, if you include the National governments of Baldwin and Chamberlain, since 1940. The Tories in last year's British election had two great assets; booming prosperity at home and the fall in international tension.

In fact, conditions were so good that the Labor Party could get no grip at all on their Tory opponents. Eden then—more so than now—seemed to stand almost above party and had great personal popularity. Most embarrassing of all for the Labor Party, hardly any of the dire predictions they had made in the previous election of 1951 had come true. The Tories had not brought unemployment; they had not cut the social services; they had not ground the faces of the poor, they had not proved themselves truculent warmongers in their dealings with the Communist world. Labor could no longer campaign against Baldwin and Chamberlain, against unemployment and appeasement and the horrors of the twenties and thirties. It had to campaign against a highly successful post-war Conservative administration.

The Democrats are obviously in somewhat similar difficulties. For the first time since 1932, it is going to be difficult to campaign against Herbert Hoover. The Republicans, like the British Conservatives, have finally broken the bands of steel that linked their name to the words "unemployment" and "depression." And like the Tories, they enjoy the two great assets of prosperity at home and comparative peace abroad. There is this further parallel: the Eisenhower Republicans are a major force in this election, just as the Tories were last year in Britain, because the leopard appears at last to have changed his spots.

It may be that from now until November, Adlai Stevenson will be "one heart beat from the Presidency"; it may be that the Democrats' "permanent majority" will assert itself if, for medical reasons, the Republicans were to find themselves bereft of the magic of the Eisenhower name. But this possibility aside, the Democrats face a problem which Labor last year did not manage to solve; they must present a new and dynamic vision of American life if they are to recapture the initiative from their progressive conservative opponents. Writing prior to the acceptance speech of the Presidential candidate, one must report that the Democrats have not demonstrated at this convention that they are likely to be able to do so.

A Gallery of Losers

Drawings by Maas

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BIG DITCH FOR OIL

The Meaning of the Suez Crisis . . by JON KIMCHE

London

IT WAS an uncanny experience sitting in the gallery of the House of Commons on Thursday of August 2 and watching the unfolding of what might well become the decisive crisis of the Commonwealth. There below sat Parliament—"in impressive unity," said the *Times* next morning. But there was little of the atmosphere of a great occasion. The Labor benches were half empty, and those on the government side were far from full. There was no crowd of latecomers at the bar of the House. There was an air of unreality about the entire debate that followed, heightened if anything by the evident agreement and determination of both government and opposition.

Yet it was without doubt one of the gravest occasions on which the House has met since the end of the Second World War. The issues were clearly and boldly stated, the lion's roar was genuine enough and the drama of the three Foreign Ministers meeting across the road added to what should have been a tense and momentous occasion; but it just was not that. Somewhere in the general setting there was a false note.

As I sat there I tried to identify it, and my mind went back to another debate on a similar Thursday afternoon two years and four days earlier, on July 29, 1954, when Parliament was about to rise, as on this occasion, for its three months' summer recess. The Secretary for War, Antony Head, had moved a motion that the House approves the Heads of Agreement which he had initialed two days earlier in Cairo, and which provided for the complete British evacuation from the canal zone by June, 1956. He argued that it had to be recognized that either in peace or war the facilities of the Suez Canal, or of the British base in Egypt, would be little or no use if Egypt were hostile. The base had also lost much of its past military value because of the development of nuclear weapons, he argued, and he pleaded for silence by the critics lest they spoil the chances of better Anglo-Egyptian relations.

But far more significant—perhaps the most significant speech in British post-war foreign policy—was the argument with which the then Foreign Secretary, Mr. Eden, wound up the debate. It provides the explanation for the flatness of last week's Suez debate.

THIS was how Mr. Eden explained the situation in that midsummer of 1954. "We are not proposing to create a new base in Cyprus. Nothing of the kind is proposed. The main base, as a base for war, will remain in Egypt." He was referring here to the clause in the agreement which gave Great Britain the right of re-entry in time of war. Mr. Eden went on to describe how the new arrangements would not lead to a power vacuum in the Middle East since it would enable British forces to become much more mobile. The troops in Libya, Jordan and Aden could be increased and moved at will. Without this evacuation what would happen in 1956, Eden asked the House? And he told members that Britain would in such a case "have no place, no establishments, no workshops, no possibility of going in again, no right of re-entry whatever and assurance of the upkeep of the base. We would have the absolute assurance of the worst possible relations with Egypt and with all the other Arab countries, leading to rising tension," Mr. Eden concluded emphatically.

Mr. Eden then turned to make the only reference to shipping through the canal in his speech. It was perhaps the strongest case that could be made against the agreement, he acknowledged, but then he turned to brush it aside as largely irrelevant. Listening to some of the speeches, he added caustically, one might have thought that traffic on the canal had largely been held up. Actually, more traffic than ever before was going through the canal. The Israeli problem was a special one. The only hope of settling it was by Britain developing better relations with both sides. That was that.

Britain's dependence on the canal did not worry the Foreign Secretary at that time, and it was clear from his concluding remarks why that was so.

> It is ludicrous to pretend that, as a result of the agreement, our influence is going to be undermined throughout the Middle East. I do not believe that for one moment, and I will tell hon. Members why. . . .
>
> On a basis of friendship, we have an opportunity, on an entirely new basis—a new conception—to influence them [the Arab countries] and work with them. . . .
>
> With Saudi Arabia we have just concluded an agreement to arbitrate our differences there. . . . With Jordan we have our treaty. With Israel we want and shall maintain the friendliest relations we can establish. . . .
>
> Does not this House see that through all these things, and finally, most important of all, this agreement with Egypt, we shall be creating a new pattern of friendship throughout the Middle Eastern regions? . . . Set in this context, I suggest to the House that the prospect of a new and growing collaboration with our Arab friends is now opened up.

It need hardly be added that in this course outlined by Mr. Eden, the British government was supported and encouraged, if not actually pressed, by the Eisenhower Administration and by Mr. Dulles especially. This then was how London and Washington viewed the Middle East two years ago, when the Suez agreement was signed. Looking at it now

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the colossal error of the day stands out like a pyramid in the desert: it was a repetition of a traditional concept in British Middle Eastern policy over the last thirty years: Egypt, Suez and indeed the whole region were evaluated purely from the point of view of their importance in a war. Their even greater importance in peace time was totally overlooked both in London and Washington.

Otherwise it would be difficult to explain why the vital importance of the Suez Canal received no attention in the Egyptian negotiations. Its decisive function in the supply of oil to Western Europe was as apparent in 1954 as it is today. Was there no one among Eden's or Dulles' foreign-affairs, military or economic advisers who drew their chief's attention to this problem? Someone must have done so, for there is a reference to the Constantinople Convention of 1888 in the agreement. But clearly it was concluded that if Egypt could be trusted with the base she could also be trusted with Western Europe's oil supplies in the "new pattern of friendship" which was foreseen.

BUT EVEN so we have to recognize that neither the British nor the United States, because of their military preoccupations, paid adequate attention to the peace-time implications of abandoning the Suez base. They were too busy turning a political necessity into a political virtue to consider the changed situation of the canal in relation to Western Europe, to weigh the consequences of abandoning physical control over the canal at the very moment when it had become more important to Western Europe than it had ever been during the eighty-seven years of its existence.

For by 1956 the Suez Canal had become as much of the Middle Eastern oil complex feeding Western Europe as were Kuweit, Iraq, Bahrein, Qatar and, to a lesser extent, Saudi Arabia—the countries producing the oil. Through the canal passed more oil than the total combined output of Kuweit and Iraq, the two largest suppliers of Western Europe. By the **end of 1956, barring interruption,** some 90 million tons of oil worth 2 1/2 billion dollars will have passed northwards through the canal in the twelve months, carried by something more than 5,000 tankers.

It was this detail that the Anglo-American policy-planners overlooked when they worked on the pattern of British withdrawal from Egypt. It must rank surely as one of the most remarkable oversights in modern history.

Nor was that all. The Western hunger for Middle East oil is growing at an extraordinary rate. Last year's output of Middle East oil of 150 million tons is estimated to reach 400 million tons by 1965 and 900 millions by 1975. The larger portion of this vast increase will be flowing westwards either through the canal or through existing and new pipelines from the oilfields to the Mediterranean. The stake thus is much bigger than even current figures of canal-transit shipments would indicate.

To meet this growth in demand and trade the Suez Canal Company had already approved plans that **would enable it to cater for traffic** up to about 160 to 180 million tons of oil, but even this would be inadequate to meet the needs of Western Europe and the United States after 1965. It is estimated that by 1975 something like 300 to 350 million tons will have to be carried by tankers through the Suez and ancillary canals, after allowing for direct shipments to the United States by the Cape route, and also allowing for a maximum of shipment through the pipelines from the Iraqi and Saudi Arabian oilfields to the Mediterranean.

The basic consideration therefore in any discussion on the general dependence of Western Europe on the Suez Canal is that this cannot be isolated from the general dependence on Middle East oil. The issue is not the abstract principle of free shipping through the canal but the availability of Middle East oil whether it be transported through the canal or through pipelines.

Thus the hunt for alternatives to the Suez Canal is largely unrealistic so long as it ignores the problem of the supply of oil; partial solutions **are possible, but the West faces one**

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major problem in the need to ensure its future oil supplies. These will not be assured by alternate canals or pipelines or even by the proposed internationalization of the Suez Canal.

Thus the new fast and large tankers of 50,000 to a 100,000 tons' displacement can carry oil economically round the Cape from Persia or Arabia to the United States, but not to either Western Europe or Great Britain; the additional journey of 4,700 miles would add a crippling margin to the existing pressure on new tanker construction. The current program estimates that the present tanker fleet of 40 million tons' displacement will have to be increased to 60 millions tons over the next ten years, and doubled again in the following ten years. A program of this kind calls for the greatest economy possible in tanker usage. The problem is not how to do without the Suez Canal but how to ensure that the canal is made to serve best the needs of Western Europe.

In this connection it has to be emphasized that the proposals that have been made for an alternative canal from Elath or Aqaba to Haifa would serve at best merely as a complementary canal to the existing means of transit; it could not possibly serve as a substitute for the Suez Canal or even as an adequate alternative. That is if the proposal were a practical one.

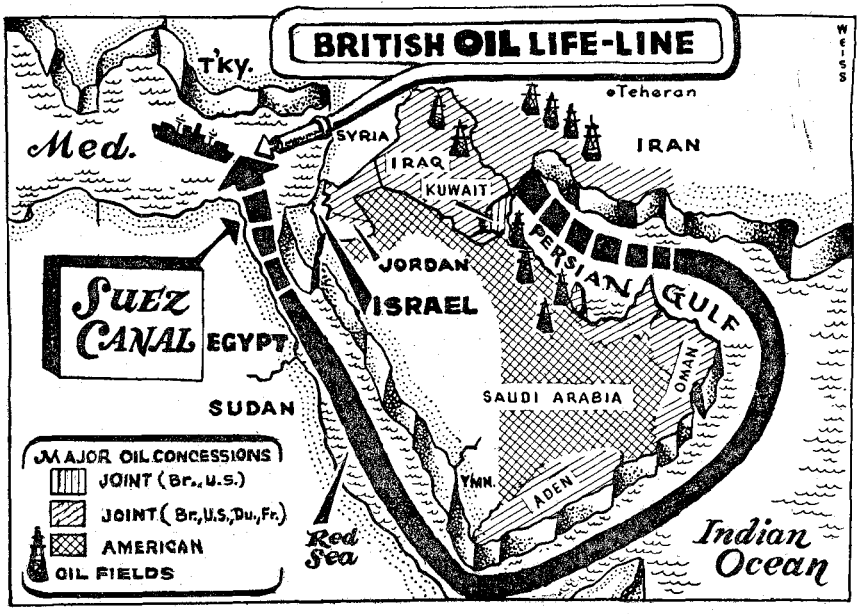
It is hardly so if the sources of Middle East oil remain largely in Arab hands and if the entry into this proposed alternative canal passes through disputed Egyptian and Saudi Arabian territorial waters in the Gulf of Aqaba.

The political problem also affects the proposal to run an oil pipe from Elath to Haifa, or from some point in the Gulf of Aqaba to Haifa; the gulf waters are claimed as territorial waters by Egypt on one side and by Saudi Arabia on the other. The technical problems of discharging oil from so large a flow of tankers is also considerable.

The fact remains that there exists no easy technical solution to the problem of Egypt's grip on the canal or the Arab hold on Middle East oil. The large and fast tankers can be a partial solution, but will hardly do more than account for that part of the traffic which the Suez Canal in any case could not cope with; the same applies to pipelines from the oilfields to Syrian, Lebanese or even to Turkish ports as was suggested in the House of Lords by Lord Birdwood.

Even if the political problems do not interfere, the same is true of the proposed Elath-Haifa pipeline: it is questionable whether it could carry more than one-tenth of the oil now passing through the canal, even under the most favorable circumstances.

The problem which the British, the French and the United States now face is therefore clearly something much bigger than that of free and uninterrupted passage of ships through the Suez Canal. The present crisis has brought to a head an issue that was bound to arise before long —the future relations of Western Europe to one of its basic sources of energy. The canal crisis has demonstrated that this is not something that can be left to the commercial negotiations of the oil companies and local governments any longer.



CLEARLY if the Western governments give in and surrender their positions then they will remain for years exposed to every threat and whim of the Middle East countries controlling the source of oil and the transit routes by which it flows. On the other hand, if they take up arms or resist in other ways the acts of nationalization of the canal and perhaps of some of the oilfields, they will find much of the Asian, African and all the Communist world marshaled against them; they will even find their own people uneasy about the issue on which they fight.

But perhaps there still is time for one other alternative, more to the point than new canals through Israel or pipelines through Turkey. The Western sponsors of the London conference should and could take the issue much further. They ought to propose now the nationalization not only of the Suez Canal but also of all the Middle East oilfields under the egis of a United Nations Middle Eastern authority which would ensure the free flow of oil and shipping, which would respect all the decencies of sovereignties of the states concerned and which would ensure that the profits derived from the oil trading and from canal dues shall be devoted to those social priorities which need them most in the countries concerned, starting with the Aswan Dam.

Here indeed is a radical solution, yet no more radical than the problem involved. And the step, once taken, could point the way to the solution of the broader question: how, in the long run, the world community can be assured access at fair prices to the vital raw materials of which, by accident of nature, certain regions have been granted a monopoly.

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CAN WE AFFORD PEACE?

The Boom Needn't Bust . . by DAVID HAMILTON

DURING the height of the cold war it was frequently stated that Stalin and Co. could sink us economically by declaring peace. Since they were obviously not in love with capitalism, just why they did not do so was a question for speculation. The speculation was half in jest, but now the matter is no longer a laughing one. The Russians evidently have declared peace.

What will be the effect on the American economy? Will arms expenditure and foreign aid be reduced? If so, will the American economy, all by itself and in accordance with the so-called "immutable" laws of supply and demand, respond purposefully to this change in policy? Or will it bobble like a ship without a rudder? The financial and economic pundits are now asking such questions in all seriousness. There are no unequivocal answers; all that can be considered are alternate possibilities. But these seem limited, at least for the calculable future.

First of all, it should be clear that this is no tempest in a teapot. Because of the cold war the United States never did go through a full-scale post-war readjustment. What we may now face is what the unsuccessful prognosticators of 1946-47 based their forecasts on—a serious reduction in government outlay, in other words a delayed demobilization of the economy.

The fear that this readjustment will reduce national income and employment is based on a widespread belief that the American economy is shored up by defense expenditure. There is more than a grain of truth in this. Almost everyone is now familiar with the truism that aggregate expenditure is the same thing as national income. Any reduction in total expenditure is recognized as a threat to an existent level of national income and of employment. Since government expenditure has been amounting to from one-fifth to one-fourth of aggregate expenditure, serious reduction of the largest category of government outlay is not to be taken lightly, blithely trusting in the "natural order" and Adam Smith's invisible hand.

Further complicating the picture is the possibility that there may be a shift in the character of military expenditure. It appears that more emphasis is being placed on new super-weapons and less on orthodox weapons. This shift would mean a reduction in the proportion of the military dollar going for manpower and an increase in the proportion going to armaments firms. Thus the total outlay may be smaller, and of this total a smaller proportion would go into wages as against such other forms of income as interest and profits. Since the recipients of these latter forms of income are by and large in the upper-income brackets, savings will be increased. In fact, the general shift in income distribution from lower to higher receivers, apparently going on right now, would be accentuated.

WE ARE being told that these fears are unwarranted for any one of a number of reasons. The most simple reassurance is that the American economy right now is so buoyant that increased consumer expenditure is ready to make up for any federal cutback. Presumably, the consumers all have bottomless caves somewhat like the one from which Jack Benny gets additional money. But with consumer debt rising at a spectacular rate, it is apparent that any money caves the consumer may have access to are well guarded by the lending community charging the usual 12 to 18 per cent. Furthermore, any cutback in government outlay has an immediate effect in reducing consumer outlay. Much of the present consumer prosperity is a direct product of high government outlay. To the discerning, this "natural" buoyancy is as authentic as a three-dollar bill.

A second straw upon which confidence rests is the idea that any reduction in government outlay will mean reduced taxes and thereby provide the funds for additional consumer outlay. It depends on whose and what taxes are adjusted. If the income tax is reduced by flattening out its rising scale, the rich will accumulate more savings. With a reduction in corporate taxes, corporate savings would increase. Since defense expenditure does partly underwrite consumption outlay, and since a reduction in defense expenditure would mean an immediate consumption cut, it is unlikely that capital investment would be increased, on a declining market for consumer goods, to offset the increased saving. Only in such an unlikely event could rising unemployment be avoided.

On the other hand, cuts in excise taxes on mass-consumed goods would have the effect of increasing consumer purchasing power. Raising the exemption on the income tax or lowering the rates more in the lower brackets than in the high brackets would also increase consumption outlay. Additional amounts of money in the hands of the poor are largely spent for consumption goods; additional amounts in the hands of the rich go more to increase the volume of savings.

RELIANCE is also placed on the so-called built-in stabilizers—unemployment compensation, old age and survivor's insurance and farm payments. The stabilizing effect of these factors is overemphasized and widely misunderstood. There is some vague idea that as national income declines, these payments will all automatically

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increase. However, only unemployment compensation increases for certain as employment falls. And even in this case, the unemployment benefits are less than the lost income so that these benefits would not prevent national income from falling. They merely place a limit below which it cannot fall. These so-called built-in stabilizers do have the effect of raising the bottom of the trough of the business cycle, but they will not prevent a recession, and a serious one at that.

Confidence has also been engendered by the experience of 1946-47 and 1953, at which times military expenditure declined without precipitating a serious depression. Howthen had huge holdings of liquid assets—savings accumulated during World War II. The slight recession ever, national income did decline in both cases and we had what were called minor "roll-backs." In 1946 the situation was entirely different from what exists today. Consumers of 1953-54 was generated largely by the hard-money policy throughout the greater part of 1953 and was corrected by an alteration in this policy. But since that time the stock-market boom, the frenzied sales promotions, the advance of consumer debt and falling farm income make the situation today less propitious for a defense cutback. It should be remembered that in every boom period there have been minor setbacks such as those of 1924 and 1927. These were thought to have been successfully mastered by manipulation of the interest rate and other monetary gyrations which were completely ineffective in the different conditions of 1929.

FINALLY, the threat of trouble is held to be insignificant and overrated because defense expenditure right now is only about 10 to 15 per cent of aggregate national income. Comparisons are made with the total amount now spent on soft goods, durable goods and services. But this argument, as well as the other two, ignores the multiplier and acceleration effect of any reduction of national income. The multiplier effect is simply the fact that one person's expenditure is another person's income. Therefore, an initial reduction in income to one group of income receivers will affect all those who are accustomed to receive the expenditure of the initial group of income receivers. But there is a tertiary effect, for the second group also makes expenditures, the income of still a third group, etc. The only thing which keeps a reduction from causing a holocaust is the fact that on the way down people do dip into past savings and therefore the reduction is somewhat less at each stage. Studies of the multiplier in the United States indicate that it is somewhere around three. Therefore, a reduction of ten billions would reduce national income by thirty.

Furthermore, such a reduction, felt through reduced consumer expenditure, would have an even greater effect on capital-goods industries. This effect is known as the accelerator. Every reduction in consumer outlay has its effect on business expectations. Business men scale down their investment expenditure with reduced consumption. In fact, some economists insist that a mere reduction in the rate of *increase* of consumption will have its effect on business expectations and thus on investment outlay. A reduction of, say, 10 per cent in consumption-goods expenditure would result in an even greater percentage decline in capital-goods expenditure. The interaction of the accelerator and multiplier gives to recessions an almost avalanche effect once they get tripped off by some small event. This relationship also explains why depressions seem to feed on themselves.

The multiplier and accelerator work both ways, and in recent years their influence on a recovery and the following boom has been gratefully acknowledged. But their effect in bringing on a sudden, sharp and devastating depression is frequently forgotten. Certainly, the declines in housing outlay, cotton textiles and automobiles in the late 20's were quite small in and of themselves—no greater than the small boulder unloosed by the unwary mountain climber.

Thus, the problem presented to the United States by the changed world picture is one of economic strategy. Shall we let things take their course, hoping for the best? Or shall we use all the knowledge we now have of how the economy works to carry out a planned readjustment? And if the latter course, what kind of planned program should we have?

CERTAINLY the first course has the sanction of tradition and in an era of new-found contentment and complacency tradition has great appeal. We have made of free enterprise and the belief that the market will solve all our problems a new transcendentalism. Yet the facts are against the faith. The economic history of the United States reveals a boom and bust pattern. Given its head, the private-enterprise system has never generated sufficient private investment or consumption to maintain continued full employment. Although compensatory spending is supposedly a phenomenon of the 1930's, only the name for it was new. Our gifts of the public domain, not only to homesteaders, but to the railroads during the latter half of the nineteenth century, was only one of the many ways by which the government propped the free-enterprise system. We have a long history of subsidization of industry through such free government services as the post-office system, through the sale of surplus military plant and equipment and through outright subsidies of the kind currently enjoyed by the airlines. It has never been possible to admit just what this represented, but its effect was to stimulate an economy which lacked sufficient private investment to maintain full employment. Allowing matters to take their course now can have only one possible result—one more depression to add to our already long record.

But this is not necessary if in the present situation we are willing to use our economic intelligence for wise planning. If we do find it possible to reduce taxes, these cuts need to be so made that they will fall primarily to the poor, not the rich. We also need to increase the coverage and the benefits under the social-security system. Medical insurance should be included in that

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program. Wage incomes should be underwritten by a strong national minimum-wage law—one that does not merely legalize low incomes. In short, we need to establish for all a basic income below which no one shall fall. By such means consumption could be increased in the face of falling government outlay. We would have what Alvin Hansen has called a low-profit high-wage economy—one conducive to rising and continuous income and employment.

We also need to be ready with what Edgar Snow has called a Point Four Program for America (see *The Nation*, May 12). Vast sums could be expended on schools, public housing and river-valley development, to name but a few possible outlets; and these items would pay for themselves in the long run in the form of a rising national income and standard of living.

That government officials are aware of these possibilities is made clear by a recent paper read by Dr. Grover W. Ensley, executive director of the Joint Economic Committee, before the Fifteenth Stanford Business Conference. Dr. Ensley outlined the extent of need for expenditure on public works—schools, highways, hospitals, etc.—and said that spending for such purposes could make up for the drop in the defense budget if and when it comes. His optimistic paper contained no hint, however, that plans were under way now so that the programs could be put into the spending stage immediately. Timing has long been recognized as crucial in the use of public works as a stopgap against an immediate economic crisis. Unemployment can grow to appalling percentages while public works are still on the drawing boards.

There is no reason for optimism. Except in the area of fiscal and monetary policy, planning has become a horrid word, thanks partially to the efforts of such imported economists as Mr. Hayek and Mr. von Mises. In fact the bible of the anti-planners, Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom*, has just been brought out in a new paper-back edition by the University of Chicago Press, evidence that this way of thinking has not lost its appeal. All thought on planning vs. come-what-may has been polarized. We have been convinced that planning leads only to serfdom and have confused planning for specific problems with some overall, all-encompassing plan.

But we are fortunately not faced with the dilemma, shall we plan everything, or shall we give everything its head? We are faced only by the problem of what, when and where we shall plan. We need planning for what Veblen called the "interstitial" areas which lie between already privately planned large industries. Certainly the suburban paper boys, the shoeshine stands and barber shops can be left to Adam Smith. But what to do about the Missouri River Valley is another question; so is low-income housing, education in economically retarded areas and medical care. And all of these are related to the larger problem of maintaining a growing and fully employed economy.

It should be clearly recognized by now that the dominant power group in the United States is the business community — both large and small. The sentiment of the general populace, thanks to a largely subservient press, is predominantly in their favor. Any program for a readjustment without "moderate roll-backs" and with minimum hardship — for example, the program very sketchily mentioned above — would have to overcome the hostility of this potent power block reinforced by community sentiment.

MYTHS WE SWEAR BY

Gobbledygook of Politics . . by PAUL CROSSER

WHILE David Hume, eighteenth-century philosopher, distinguished between strictly political and strictly social—i. e., non-governmental—matters, he argued that both were merely appearances and thus reduced the distinction between them to meaninglessness. This particular *Humist* bent for undifferentiation has befuddled the thinking of most American political analysts. For example: because most analysts interpret actions on the basis of prima facie evidence and take words at face value, they characterize the Truman era as an extension of the Roosevelt one. Yet in reality the two regimes were basically in opposition. F. D. R. used conservative words to cover up radical measures; Truman used radical words to cover up conservative and even reactionary measures.

The befuddlement has become compounded since the advent of Eisenhower. The Administration which must defend itself at the polls in November is neither wholly progressive nor wholly conservative; as a result, progressive slogans alternate with conservative ones, depending upon what kind of action they are supposed to camouflage. That the contradictory slogans reflect contradictory policies, which in turn reflect a contradictory reality, is something the analysts do not care to consider.

The inability or unwillingness of analysts to probe for the reality beneath the word has permitted the American public to live in a world of illusion of which the oratory of the national conventions serves as a dramatic example. And Americans will continue to move from one exploded illusion to another illusion which is bound to explode, so long

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as the *Humist* approach to political and socio-political analysis continues.

That the Wilson and Roosevelt Administrations had the same international goals constitutes another of our current illusions. Wilson instituted a policy aimed at the destruction of the Soviet regime by outside force if necessary. The Republican Administrations which followed implicitly accepted this policy. Roosevelt rejected it. The diplomatic recognition which he extended to the Soviet Union constituted a reversal in American foreign policy with regard to the major international political issue of the twentieth century. F. D. R.'s whole foreign policy can be said to have been based on recognition of the Soviet state as a political and social reality.

The Truman Administration, in turn, reverted to the Wilson policy. Wilson's "*cordon sanitaire*" paralleled Truman's "*containment.*" The ultimate aim of both was the collapse of the Soviet regime, and both administrations were prepared to use force to accomplish the goal. If Wilson applied force directly, and Truman indirectly, the difference can be accounted for by the interim growth of Soviet military and economic might.

Basically both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations treated the Soviet regime as a kind of phantom. Its industrial progress was ascribed to a "miracle" produced not by the Russians themselves but by foreign engineers and scientists imported by Moscow. Indeed, the Russion mind was regarded as "mystical" and incapable of technological inventiveness.

The myth of Russian technological backwardness, along with that of its impending internal collapse, has now been exploded by the most circumspect factual information. A foreign policy based on these myths becomes itself a myth.

With an eye to the vote of the foreign born, GOP leaders during the election campaign of 1952 talked much of "rollback"—the removal of the Eastern European nations from the Soviet orbit. This kind of talk continues—as talk. But it no longer represents American foreign policy, which has abandoned the preventive-war concept.

Even if no new policy has taken its place, it does not mean that progress has not been made. The Geneva summit meeting served to affirm what Americans had forgotten after the days of Roosevelt—that the Soviet world exists as a potent force in world politics. That meeting was useful in another respect. The designers of the Truman foreign policy were so trapped in their own verbalisms that Truman could never have gone to Geneva without being accused of appeasement. Eisenhower, not otherwise noted for his contributions to American semantics, at least succeeded in impressing indelibly upon the minds of the American people the difference between appeasement and negotiation.

THE illusions pervading American foreign policy are closely linked with those about the internal social forces supposedly supporting that policy. Truman policies, domestic as well as foreign, were supposed to express the interest of a liberal-labor coalition, just as are those of Truman's protégé, Averell Harriman. Eisenhower policies are allegedly shaped largely by big business. But these conceptions ignore the middle strata of American society. If any society can be said to be prevailingly middle-class in character, it is the American; even the labor movement here is not a labor movement in any strict sense, it is rather a middle-class movement in its social outlook and economic aspirations.

In this country even big business cannot be considered a class in any rigid sense of the word, Democratic demagoguery notwithstanding. Numerically, small business dominates the economic scene; indeed, the whole American business world has a predominantly middle-class outlook, opposed equally to the extremes of wealth and poverty. Since World War II, moreover, the redistribution of income has created a situation in which at least two-thirds of the American people have a vested interest in the preservation of the middle class. Thus, any domestic policy aimed at enlarging its prerogatives and security can be certain of overwhelming mass support. Conversely, any threat to it—real or fancied—is likely to provoke a powerful, and sometimes an irrational, reaction. It was the threat to the German middle class represented by the economic drain of World War I and the post-war inflation which made it succumb to the hysterics of Hitler.

No similar threat is likely to arise here. The middle-class base in America is too broad (in Germany it could never be said to have included a Socialist-minded labor movement); there is little likelihood that the United States will ever experience the galloping inflation which plagued Germany in the twenties. But an *external* threat is another matter. The playing on middle-class fears *vis à vis* the Soviet Union has been a major factor in American foreign policy (except during the F. D. R. Administration) from Wilson through Truman. In that sense it can be said that Truman's policy was based on keeping the middle class in a constant state of turmoil through magnification of the danger which Russia and communism presented to its security.

IN THIS context it is relevant to point out that both the Roosevelt and Truman administrations were "crisis" administrations in the sense that both were confronted by a series of "critical" situations. The Roosevelt crises were real, however, while those of the Truman regime were to a great extent manufactured, or at least magnified, in Washington. A policy geared to overcoming fear is quite different from one geared to creating fear.

Under the Eisenhower Administration, the American middle class is returning to a state of normalcy. Political leaders and high administration officials are soft-pedalling, to a degree, the alleged Soviet threat; the whole notion of the inevitability of Russia's internal collapse or of its extermination by outside force has in turn, been permitted to recede to the background. How long this will be the case remains to be seen.

In the meantime, though Soviet terminology does not acknowledge its existence, a Soviet middle class

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is slowly rising. No verbalism can hide the social and economic reality: as the underprivileged worker and peasant disappears from the Russian scene, as the gap between higher and lower incomes shrinks (the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the U. S. S. R. has stated this as a goal), a major structural change is taking place in Soviet society. Perhaps the interests of these broad class groupings, one in the United States and the other in the Soviet Union, will provide a common denominator on the basis of which a sound and realistic policy could be built which may bring the two countries into agreement.

Balladier For Americans . . by EARL ROBINSON

"WE WROTE the 'Ballad for Americans' for everybody, not only Republicans," said Mr. Latouche. "Especially not only Republicans," said Mr. Robinson.

This is a quote from the *New Yorker* interview with the authors in July, 1940, when their "Ballad For Americans" was sung at the Republican National Convention. It highlights some of the conflict faced by the artist in our society. It has special reference to John Latouche, the brilliant writer, poet and lyricist, who died this month of a heart attack at the age of thirty-eight.

Latouche was always what would be called a "controversial figure." Basically, he was humanist. He loved people, all kinds of people, but this never prevented him from satirizing in his conversation as well as his lyrics all forms of humbug, cant, super-patriotism, etc. He is noted among his friends for his hilarious rendition of a song he originally wrote for Spivy, a night-club singer. The chorus, to the tune of "John Brown's Body," goes "We're the Daughters of the American Revolution. But we'll never be the mothers of another!"

A wit and a humorist, he had a deep and serious attitude to life and his work. He was committed to reaching a wide popular audience (he worked much and competently in the popular-song and tin-pan-alley field with Duke Ellington and others), but he was always exploring new poetic paths. Consequently he would time and again run smack up against the dead level imposed by commercialism, the open antagonism to a new idea. Latouche was essentially a sanguine person, but he went through periods of deep depression shared by most serious artists of our time.

We met on the Federal Theatre Project in February of 1938. Both of us, it turned out, had had essentially the same idea and out of the collaboration came "Ballad for Americans." I remember that the tremendous cast of recently unemployed actors, dancers and singers applauded for five minutes when "Ballad" was first played for them. Then followed fourteen frustrating months of rehearsal, and the show, *Sing For Your Supper*, had scarcely started running and picking up audiences when the Federal Theatre Project was abandoned by Congress.

The history of "Ballad" from then on is well known. Paul Robeson's magnificent singing of it twice on CBS, the records, publication, movie sale and the Republicans presenting it at their convention exactly one year after they had (with the help of the Southern Democrats) killed the "boondoggling" project on which the "Ballad for Americans" was born. The ups and downs were enough to frustrate any artist.

It is, in fact, remarkable that John Latouche kept his gaiety and his positive energy through the forties and up to his death. When he was unfairly listed in Red Channels and much of his writing was consequently kept off radio, TV and the movies, he was deeply hurt and at the urging of friends sat down to write a statement "clearing himself." (He was neither Communist nor pro-Communist.) But the melancholy picture of scared-liberal-spilling-guts was not to be repeated in his case. His native stubbornness and conviction of what is decent behavior asserted themselves. He named no names and never finished the statement. He seemed to be saying, "I am what I am. Please accept me. But if you can't or won't, there is nothing I can do about it."

Except to produce new works. He reached out, enchantingly and creatively, into uncharted fields in *Ballet Ballads* with Jerome Moross. He helped set new and more popular directions for native American opera in *Golden Apple* (Moross) and *Ballad of Baby Doe* with Douglass Moore. The latter will be on Broadway this fall, and *Ballet Ballads* will finally reach TV this winter. Eighteen years later, "Ballad For Americans" is known and is being sung by children of all ages in this and other lands.

We can perhaps take these successes in spite of obstacles as a vindication of the American Way. Through struggle anything can be accomplished, etc. We can also refuse to be blinded by some superficial successes and recognize that the creative artist with a feeling for humanity has a tough row to hoe in this land of ours. His economic struggle is often so desperate that compromises with principle are forced on him. The inborn desire of every artist to express himself creatively *in his art* on the important issues of the day—equality, civil liberties, international understanding, war and peace—are stymied or stillborn. "It's not commercial." And the crusher, "It's controversial."

So John Latouche was controversial. May we remember, and may America breed many more like him.

EARL ROBINSON is the composer, in addition to "Ballad for Americans," of the musical, Sandhog, *recently produced at the Phoenix Theatre. He has written a great deal for the movies, notably the score of* The Roosevelt Story *and the theme ballad for* A Walk in the Sun.

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BOOKS and the ARTS

Existentialist Nerve Twitch

By William Cooper

London

AT THE END of May this year the English literary scene was rocked by a phenomenon. A book was published called *The Outsider.*

The author's name had previously been unknown, Mr. Colin Wilson. (One is forced to keep on referring to him as Mr. Colin Wilson in order to distinguish him from all the other literary Mr. Wilsons.) Within a month of publication *The Outsider* was in highbrow literary circles the book most talked-about for years—its sub-title is An Enquiry Into The Nature Of The Sickness Of Mankind In The Mid-Twentieth Century. The author's age was twenty-four.

The *Sunday Times* and the *Observer* reviewed the book at length on the day before publication, the *Times Literary Supplement* four days afterwards and the literary weeklies disarranged themselves to follow suit. As far as being reviewed goes, other books in the same period made a similar start; but about *The Outsider's* start a difference was immediately apparent, the difference which seems to be the indicator nowadays of whether a book is going to be "talked-about." This book had hit some kind of nerve; somehow, somewhere, the highbrow public twitched.

Everyone who reviewed *The Outsider* observed that Mr. Colin Wilson's feat is remarkable, and so will everyone else who reads it.* In the first place it represents a remarkable feat of reading. One's first impression is that Mr. Colin Wilson has read everything, for nearly every page is spattered with the world's literary names—Chuang-tze, Swedenborg, Boehme, Blake, Roquentin, Ramakrishna, Freud, Kant, Alyosha, Nietzsche, all on one page taken at random.

After commenting on his feat of reading, the professional literary persons divided in their attitude to Mr. Colin Wilson's thesis, some enthusiastically approving of it, some expressing no opinion and a minority of one really attacking it. However, studying *The Outsider's* collected press in tranquility, one tends to the opinion that reviewers lost their heads less than the later hullabaloo leads one to believe—until one remembers that what matters most is not praise or abuse but *attention.*

The Outsider is the first English existentialist book. In view of the way it has bowled everybody over, it is surprising that we have not had one before, that our native parallel contribution to philosophy, logical positivism, has warded off existentialist manifestations so long. Put in brief to begin with: *The Outsider* corresponds, at least for the first third of the book, with the type schizophrene; the sickness arises from the existentialist schizophrenic conviction that everything is unreal and "Nothing's true but what is horrible"; and the cure is a new unorthodox religion to be founded by Mr. Colin Wilson, a religion, one gathers, of general if unspecified nastiness.

The Outsider certainly got attention. As the wave of attention continues to spread out from the literary center, it looks as if the supporters of his thesis show less fervor and its opponents get tougher; but it is too early to be certain, and anyway, the degree of explicit fervor is not as important as all that. All sorts of intelligent people are going about saying variations of this: "I'm told it's full of mistakes in scholarship, and I suppose a lot of it is cribbed from Halévy. All the same, there's something *in* it. . . ." As one had not grumbled about mistakes in scholarship or cribbing from Halévy—what on earth is to be expected in the first book of a young man of twenty-four?—the peculiar insistence, apologetic, irrational and yet determined, gives the show away. A nerve is twitching.

LAST March in *The Nation,* Mr. C. P. Snow wrote about a sort of cleavage that is taking place in English intellectual society. On the one hand there is what has come to be called the Establishment and its supporters: on the other a minority of rebels—whom, incidentally, Mr. Snow found not half rebellious enough. He described what the term Establishment means as "an agreement, entirely unspoken and very largely unconscious, to preserve substantially the present web of power-relations." The rebels fall into two groups—Mr. Snow left out scientists, since their place in English intellectual life is curiously separate. One group, spoken for by a collection of young literary people, their most gifted novelist being Mr. Kingsley Amis and their most gifted poet Mr. Philip Larkin, displays a rough-necked neutralism to the Establishment; the other group, of youngish journalists, by naming, defining and attacking the Establishment, has hit apparently the sole hittable political nerve.

It is arguable that any group of people bound together by an agreement, whether unconscious or not, to preserve the present web of power-relations in a period which is going through a social-economic revolution by no means over, is automatically condemned to failure. In a sense the Establishment, simply because it *is* the Establishment, has—though it may not know it—had it. Twenty years from now we may have an-

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* *The Outsider* will be published by Houghton Mifflin in September.

WILLIAM COOPER, British novelist, is the author of Scenes from Provincial Life, The Struggles of Albert Woods *and* The Ever-Interesting Topic.

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other Establishment, but it will not be this one. And this one must have tremors about its fate, possibly not among those members who are currently wielding the greatest power—actually wielding power seems to keep men in comparatively good psychological shape—but among those on the periphery, the supporters, the hangers-on, the persons who have thrown in their lot with the Establishment because the thought of the future is too much for them. These persons, whose only hope of preserving a life they can cope with lies in rigidifying and ossifying the structure of society around them, are in the worst mess: they do not find much in themselves to counterbalance their feeling of being cut off, their disgust, *Angst* and frustration, their bouts of finding "Nothing's true but what is horrible." They represent the dead wood in our intellectual society. These in the main seem to be the people whose bell *The Outsider* has rung. Here is the nerve in intellectual society, almost paralyzed, that *The Outsider* has started tingling again with its promise of a new religion to bring life.

Again as far as one can see in the early days, the twitch is biggest in the artistic wing of the Establishment's supporters. This is not surprising, as the artistic wing is largely composed, as Mr. Snow observed, of persons and bodies connected with *avant-garde* art of twenty years ago, and *they* seem to be attached to the Establishment only as the poorest of poor relations, half the time being snubbed for their pains. It is the fashion in London to say that it was pure chance that *The Outsider* was put so strikingly on the map by Mr. Cyril Connolly in the *Sunday Times* and Mr. Philip Toynbee in the *Observer*, the Sunday before it was published—and they undoubtedly did put it on the map, even though it would clearly have found its way there anyway—but the chance seems not such a long one when one recalls that Mr. Connolly is living on the reputation for having edited *Horizon* during the last war, while Mr. Toynbee is nearly overwhelmed, he tells us, by the difficulty of writing novels in the experimental technique.

We come to the other side of the picture, to the sort of people in whom *The Outsider* does not hit a nerve of social decadence, the persons on whom the effect of the book is to make, as we used to say in the slang of my lower-class boyhood, their feet ache. Again it does not seem like pure chance that the one and only whole-hearted attack on *The Outsider* in print comes from Mr. Amis in the *Spectator*. He does not represent the only kind of person whose feet ache at the thought of *The Outsider*, far from it, but he is the only one to say so in print. (We are promised shortly a second wholehearted attack from another quarter: I will refer to it later.) If one may invent something called the Amis-Larkin kind of society, i.e., the society about which they write and in which their public exists, the seri-

The Statues in the Public Gardens

Alone at the end of green *allées,* alone
Where a path turns back upon itself, or else
Where several paths converge, green bronze, grey stone,
The weatherbeaten famous figures wait
Inside their basins, on their pedestals,
Till time, as promised them, wears out of date.

Around them rise the willow, birch, and elm,
Sweet shaken pliancies in the weather now.
The granite hand is steady on the helm,
The sword, the pen, unshaken in the hand,
The bandage and the laurel on the brow:
The last obedience is the last command.

Children and nurses eddying through the day,
Old gentlemen with newspapers and canes,
And licit lovers, public as a play,
Never acknowledge the high regard of fame
Across their heads—the patriot's glare, the pains
Of prose—and scarcely stop to read a name.

Children, to be illustrious is sad.
Do not look up. Those empty eyes are stars,
Their glance the constellation of the mad
Who must be turned to stone. To save your garden,
My playful ones these pallid voyagers
Stand in the streak of rain, imploring pardon.

At night the other lovers come to play
Endangered games, and robbers lie in wait
To knock old ladies with a rock; but they
Tremble to come upon these stony men
And suffragettes, who shine like final fate
In the electric green of every glen.

For it is then that statues suffer their
Sacrificed lives, and sigh through fruitless trees
After the flesh. Their sighs tremble the air,
They would surrender scepters, swords, and globes,
Feeling the soft flank shudder to the breeze
Under the greatcoats and the noble robes.

In darker glades, the nearly naked stone
Of athlete, goddess, chaste as any snows
That stain them winters, tempts maiden and man
From their prosthetic immortality:
Pythagoras' thigh, or Tycho's golden nose,
For a figleaf fallen from the withered tree.

HOWARD NEMEROV

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ously striking thing about it is not its ungentlemanliness, its non-graciousness, its Americanization, but its rude social health. The need of its members to liberate themselves from themselves by a Mr. Colin Wilsonian "definitive un-reversible act," such as biting off somebody's ear or blowing their own brains out, could hardly be less.

The attitude of Mr. Snow's other rebels, the small group of political journalists proclaimed enemies of the Establishment, has not been expressed in print yet, but one would probably not be going far wrong in assuming that they declare themselves against.

Lastly, there are two other main sources of resistance. The one is, of course, of sturdy Christians—their heads begin to spin a little when they find Mr. Colin Wilson classifying Bernard Shaw and St. Augustine together, but they do not lose them: the other, from which we are expecting an attack in print shortly, is of logical positivists. (Incidentally, a point which Mr. Snow did not make is that the Amis-Larkin kind of society has been influenced by logical positivism.) This is no surprise, either: the situation can be epitomized, in a philosophical, linguistic and many another sense, by the reported interchange at a party between Mr. Colin Wilson and Professor A. J. Ayer, the chief of the logical positivists. (Mr. C.W.: "I think you are the Devil." Professor A.J.A.: "I think you are a very silly young man.") We may assume God's in His Heaven all right, there.

So we are left with contemplation of the hullabaloo to finish up with. In the literary world we have not a few writers who contest for excellence as their own publicity managers: Mr. Colin Wilson has made these old hands look like the merest beginners. Within two months the whole of literary London knows Mr. Colin Wilson intends to found a new periodical to save literature, and the national television public knows that he intends to found a new religion to save everybody.

Well, it is America's turn now.

Schools and Society

TOWARD A RECONSTRUCTED PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION. By Theodore Brameld. Dryden Press. $4.50.

By Abraham Edel

PROFESSOR BRAMELD has written an interesting and provocative book ranging over the whole field of American education from its philosophical presuppositions, cultural relations and contemporary determinants, to problems of curriculum design and control, and directions for possible large-scale reconstruction. Professor Brameld's reconstructionism differs from the more familiar progressive-education theory in stressing group self-realization rather than simply individual growth and development, in including a definite pattern of ends to be sought rather than just valuing the process of solving problems, and in its specific diagnosis of the present cultural crisis.

A schematic character is inevitable in a book covering so much ground. But one wonders whether the formulation of the outlook as a "school," looking for precursors and setting itself off from other schools, is really required to do justice to Professor Brameld's central point — the existence of a cultural crisis, its causal analysis and the terrific need for a democratic, socially awakened, critically minded youth. The overformalization unnecessarily extends philosophical claims which are then partially withdrawn in application. Thus social consensus is worked out as an over-all knowledge principle in a pragmatic vein, and later narrowed chiefly to problems of human relations; and even reconstructionist education itself turns out to have its core in the secondary program — that is, precisely where awakening of critical social awareness is most pertinent, and not where individual personal development or transmitting systematic knowledge looms largest.

In general, Professor Brameld has shown that the spirit which permeated advanced educational discussion in the America of the 1930's is no less relevant to the 1950's, though its voice is less frequently heard.

ABRAHAM EDEL is a member of the Department of Philosophy at the City College of New York and author of The Theory and Practice of Philosophy *and* Ethical Judgment: The Use of Science in Ethics.

Sport of Books

BOUILLABAISSE FOR BIBLIOPHILES. Edited with an Introduction and Notes by William Targ. World Publishing Company. $10.

By Harold T. Mason

"STYLL AM I besy bokes assemblynge" confesses an early book collector in a poem, *The Boke-Fole,* by Sebastian Brant, translated from the German in 1509 which appears to be the earliest contribution in point of time to this "book about books" edited by William Targ.

It is reassuring to observe in spite of the millions upon millions who nightly sit glued before their television sets being "entertained" by the regimented mediocrity of the average program, that there are still extant enough old-fashioned readers to encourage this sequel to Mr. Targ's previous collection, *Carrousel for Bibliophiles.* Like its predecessor, this is a compilation of stories, essays, poems and what-not, derived from many sources but all calculated to appeal to the seasoned book collector.

John Carter defines this happy breed in the initial essay, describing at some length the infinite variety of book collectors, defending them from the charge of bibliomania and explaining the real debt owed them by scholarship generally. All in all, they turn out to be good citizens of the book world. In a charmingly

HAROLD T. MASON, formerly a publisher and bookseller, is now on the executive staff of the American Academy of Music, Philadelphia.

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modest case history, Wilmarth Lewis in *Collector's Progress* tells of the beginnings of his own interest in collecting which resulted eventually in the formation of a world-famous collection centering around Horace Walpole and the Strawberry Hill Press.

An example of the specialization which is the heart and soul of book collecting is offered by the Henry and Albert W. Berg Collection devoted to first printings of first books by American authors. These rarities were exhibited at the New York Public Library in 1951. A selection of descriptive notes and literary comments by John D. Gordan is reprinted from the original catalogue of the exhibition. Here are rare books indeed: the famous *Tamerlane* of Edgar Allan Poe of which only eleven copies are known to exist; Washington Irving's *Salmagundi* papers, issued in parts, in wrappers, 1807-1808, of which a bare half-dozen sets survive; William Cullen Bryant's *The Embargo* issued privately as "by a youth of thirteen" and paid for by his father. Fewer than ten copies are to be found. In fact many first books were published at the expense of the author, among them Stephen Crane's *Maggie* and Edward Arlington Robinson's *Torrent and the Night Before.*

Belonging to the byways not the highways of the history of books is Ralph Thompson's study, "Deathless Lady." This is the record, as much as is known, of the publication of John Cleland's famous novel *Memoirs of Fanny Hill.* Written more than two hundred years ago, Fanny shocked even the mid-eighteenth century and was immediately suppressed. Yet edition after edition poured from secret London presses and the Continent was flooded with translations, often under weird titles. Publishers and booksellers in England and later in this country were fined and imprisoned by the score, yet the book has steadily if illegally been reprinted through the years. A classic—even if a shady one.

Variety is the spice of Mr. Targ's selections. In this handsomely produced volume we have a most appropriate addition for the bedside table of the confirmed book collector.

Saga of the Wobblies

THE I.W.W. ITS FIRST FIFTY YEARS, 1905-1955. By Fred Thompson. Industrial Workers of the World. $3.

By Harvey O'Connor

IN THE early decades of the century the Industrial Workers of the World flashed across the labor sky the three beacons of education, organization, emancipation. Of these, the brightest by far was education. Its message of industrial unionism, now imbedded in the CIO-AFL, was spoken, sung and acted on the stages of a hundred wobbly halls from coast to coast and from soapboxes on scores of skidroads in the dilapidated proletarian areas where the migratories shouted defiance and hope.

Fred Thompson reminds us that this union was the first to pull a sitdown, stay-in strike, back in 1906-07 in the General Electric works at Schenectady. It was the first to use modern publicity methods, as in the mass exodus of hungry textile strikers' children from Lawrence in 1912. The first suggestion of Section 7a of NIRA and of the Wagner-Connery act was seen in the Akron rubber strike of 1913 when the wobblies tried to break the open-shop impasse by proposing that union workers elect committees of their own choice to present their grievances to the companies.

Repeatedly, the I. W. W. seemed destined to become the main stream of the American labor movement. After McKees Rocks in 1910 it was by far the strongest union in steel; in 1912 its textile union was poised to sweep New England; during World War I the lumber workers were the predominant force in the industry in the Pacific Northwest, and never have so many farm laborers been organized as by the I.W.W. After World War I the union gained amazing strength in the maritime industry. But the semi-anarchism of the wobblies coupled with fierce and brutal repression by the Department of Justice and state and local governments in 1917-1919, reminiscent of the current anti-red crusade, extinguished the stars that flared so brilliantly. The I. W. W. today probably has fewer than the 4,000 members it started out with in 1905.

HARVEY O'CONNOR, author of The Empire of Oil, *was a member of the I.W.W. in 1916-1919.*

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LETTER FROM ITALY

William Weaver

Pompeii, July

THE TOURIST can enter the ruins of Pompeii by either of two main gates: one is just off the *autostrada,* the ribbon-like super-highway from Naples, and the other, which leads past the ancient amphitheatre, is on the Salerno road. But neither of these entrances, with their turnstiles and ticket-offices and waiting guides, is ideal for giving the first-time visitor a memorable, immediate impression of the Roman city.

If, instead of buying his ticket at once, the tourist strolls off to the left of the Salerno road entrance for a few yards, he can catch a first glimpse of Pompeii much as an ancient visitor might have glimpsed it, a visitor arriving from the South, from Salerno or the Roman town of Nocera. For here, in fact, is the Porta Nocera, which post-war excavations have carefully dug out of its millenial bed of ash and dirt. In itself, this sand-colored arch of *tufo* (the soft stone of which most of Pompeii is built) is not especially beautiful, and some Italian critics have fussed at the amount of money spent on unearthing what can hardly be called a work of art. Yet, even to the uninitiated visitor, this arch, the wall that stretches away from it and the surroundings give a striking insight into what Pompeii was really like.

First of all, before entering the gate, the visitor sees another important recent discovery, or rather un-covery. Only a few yards from the macadam road, where trucks and cars whiz by on the straight stretch, one sees, below the road level, at the level of the ancient city, a street of tombs. It was customary for the Romans to bury their dead outside their city walls, and one such street of tombs has already been excavated at Pompeii. These new Porta Nocera tombs form in their variety a kind of digest of Roman architecture: almost every imaginable kind of tomb is represented, from simple trench graves marked with plain stones to elaborate mausoleums in the form of monumental altars or semi-circular *exedrae,* some of them adorned with portrait statues and inscriptions, others with painting or stucco-work.

If you turn suddenly from these tombs, for a moment the Porta Nocera and the walls rising in front of you give you the sense of a living city; this could easily be an entrance to Viterbo or Perugia or some other small hill-city of Lazio or Umbria; the shape of the arches would be the same, and they would have the same earth-brown color. It's only after that first moment, when you see around you the hills of dug-up ash, like the slag outside a mine, that you are reminded of the time and money spent to bring this little corner of Pompeii to life.

FOR 200 years excavations have been going on here, but much of the early work was done either by vandals (like the Bourbon kings of Naples, who carted off mosaics and sculpture to adorn their palaces) or by unscientific, haphazard amateurs, who uncovered little more than bare walls. Inside the city, therefore, whole areas look like a kind of bare ground-plan; it is the excavating done in our century that finally gives a picture of Pompeii in the round. And in these more recently excavated streets, as at the Nocera gate, one often has the sensation that life ceased here, not in 79 A.D., but yesterday or the day before. This feeling comes chiefly from those little touches of every-day life, a dish of peas some Pompeian never lived to eat, or campaign promises scratched on a wall next to announcements of sporting events, these ordinary things which a terrible whim of nature has preserved; and the feeling of the disaster comes, too, from the grisly plaster casts of bodies of inhabitants, fleeing when death overtook them, or of the tortured body of a chained dog, contorted as if he were howling still.

But Pompeii is not all tombs and grim reminders. Other recent excavations add to the total impression of a vanished life that was led amid enviably beautiful surroundings. The Villa Julia Felix, for example, with its courtyard shaded by a portico of graceful, thin columns; or, in a house nearby, the rich fresco called *il frutteto,* where luscious figs and cherries and other Italian fruits burst with ripeness on a background of warm green leaves and sprightly birds perch in the branches or light on the grass. This fresco, along with the other recent ones, is perhaps more impressive than some of the famous frescoes excavated in the past because, inevitably, exposure causes the bright, Pompeian colors to fade.

The feeling of life here is enhanced, too, by some of the recent embellishment of the ruins. Pompeii is more than a museum; it is a number-one tourist attraction, and everything is done to make the place as attractive as it is interesting. Oleanders bloom in the ancient courtyards, flowers grow where they grew a thousand years ago and graceful cypresses and ilex line some of the streets. A discreetly concealed restaurant and bar also offer the footsore tourist more material solace.

The man responsible for these attractions, and responsible also for the excellent new excavations, is a dynamic, elderly little Neapolitan professor, Amedeo Maiuri, Naples' Director of Antiquities. From his barrack-like, high-ceilinged suite of offices over the Naples Museum, Maiuri not only superintends what goes on at Pompeii (and Cuma, Baiae and other ancient remains in the area), but he is also one of the directors of the vital *Ente Provinciale per il Turismo,* the organization that fosters tourism in the area, and thus is responsible for one of the country's chief sources of income. The author of a number of scholarly volumes, Maiuri is a typical Neapolitan combination of passionate devotion to his science and a strong sense of the practical. His personality is reflected in the management of Pompeii, and in the results: last year, close to 600,000 tourists visited the ruins. This year a similar number is expected, proving that Pompeii is a truly going concern, as well as one of Italy's most fascinating national monuments.

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RECORDS

B. H. Haggin

THOUGH Schubert's posthumous Sonata in B flat for piano and his Fantasy Op. 103 for piano four hands were both written in the last year of his life, they are different in important respects. The poignantly lovely melodic subject of the opening and closing sections of the Fantasy, the dramatic proclamations that introduce and follow the exquisite melodic episode in the Largo, the enchanting Scherzo, all these are characteristic of Schubert; but wonderful as they are they contain not as much as a hint of what is heard in the tranquilly meditative opening page of the Sonata and elsewhere in the first two movements: the implications of final illumination and sublimity, similar to what we hear in Beethoven's last sonatas. And what J. W. N. Sullivan says of Beethoven's last works may be said of Schubert's B-flat Sonata: not only does its expressive content reveal Schubert as a great spirit, but its musical embodiment of that content reveals him as a great musical genius.

Columbia ML-5061 offers a performance of the B-flat Sonata by Leon Fleisher, the young American winner of the 1952 international competition in Brussels. In organization and articulation of the musical substance and in expressive effect it is the best I have heard on LP; but a few questionable details include the C sharp Fleisher plays in the fifth measure of the second movement, which is clearly an error in the *Urtext* edition and should be B natural; and his treatment of the octave G that claims attention repeatedly in the finale and is marked *fp* at each of its important appearances: he plays it *fp* the first time but *p* most of the times thereafter, with a loss of its expressive effect. The way a certain note F hits one in the ear throughout the first movement must be the fault of the recording; and the piano sound that is correctly balanced and true in the engaging Ländler Op. 171, which Fleisher plays with admirable grace on the same record, is made brighter and shallower in the Sonata by the stepped-up treble and reduced bass.

The Fantasy Op. 103 is played on Epic LC-3183 by Helen and Karl Ulrich Schnabel, with superbly enlivening inflection, tension and contour of phrase that are not heard in the merely fluent performance by Badura-Skoda and Demus on Westminster 5047. Also on the Epic record are a number of Brahms Hungarian Dances.

Schubert's Impromptus Opp. 90 and 142—smaller-scale and more intimate examples of his matured writing for piano, most of them extraordinarily beautiful and affecting—are played on Epic LC-3232 by Karl Engel, winner of second place in the 1952 Brussels competition. For the most part his playing of them has the right lyricism and warmth, governed by excellent musical taste; occasionally one feels it could have more grace; and Op. 142 No. 4 seems to me to call for lightness and grace rather than the pounding it gets. The heavy bass and glassy treble in Op. 142 are what I would guess to be the true sound of the European (Bösendorfer?) piano which Engel played; in Op. 90 the recording makes the bass even heavier and the treble less bright.

MY HOPE for a good performance of the original piano version of Musorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* is disappointed again by the performance on Angel 35317 that introduces us to the playing of still another Russian, the young pianist Eugene Malinin. As playing of the piano it seems to be carefully restrained to ensure the production of only beautiful sounds—one result being an anti-climactic lack of sonority at the beginning and end of the final "Great Gate of Kiev." As playing of the music it indulges in fussy prettification of phrases instead of allowing them to flow naturally—"Gnomus," "The Old Castle" and the several "Promenades" being some of the sections that are damaged most by this practice. But "Bydlo," "Limoges" and "Catacombs" are played well.

My hope for a good performance of Albéniz's *Iberia* also is disappointed again—this time by Leopoldo Querol's brutal and eccentrically paced treatment of the fascinating pieces on London DTL-93022/3.

London LL-1289/90 offers both books of Debussy's Preludes; and I cannot imagine the Debussyan sonorities achieved with more precision and beauty than they are by Gulda in the few pieces I have listened to.

E. POWER BIGGS continues to record Bach on the organ in Symphony Hall, Boston—which means that most of the chorale-preludes of the *Orgelbüchlein* come off the three records of Columbia SL-227 as thick, coarse sounds fused by reverberation into a mass in which the strands of the contrapuntal texture are difficult to distinguish even with the help of the score that is provided with the records. The notes quote the usual comments on these works that describe them as a succession of masterpieces; but hearing them again

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has confirmed my earlier impression that here as elsewhere in Bach's music the masterpieces are few and the dull products of routine exercise of formula and craftsmanship are many. The flowing accompaniment which Bach puts under the chorale melody *Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ,* and the changes he makes here and there in the melody itself, produce a marvelous piece; but in a dozen other instances the addition of such an accompaniment or figuration produces something I find less impressive than the original chorale.

Bach's Eight Little Preludes and Fugues and his Fantasy in G are played by Biggs on European classic organs, whose sounds come off Columbia ML-5078 made unclear by reverberation. The works themselves I find uninteresting.

The pieces by Praetorius, Frescobaldi, Forberger and others on Vanguard BG-529, *Organ Music of the Seventeenth Century,* I also find uninteresting; and some of Gustav Leonhardt's performances on the organ of the Stiftskirche in Klosterneuberg, Austria, are not reproduced clearly.

A COMMUNICATION

(Continued from inside front cover)

solve it. They could abandon their ties with the organization, but they cannot dissolve themselves. They need to find a place in something more substantial, something different from what they have known, but which they cannot build alone.

Is the larger world of progressive, liberal and radical opinion interested in a movement for democratic socialism? I am not speaking of a front for the Communists. Nobody needs it and no one will respond to it. Nor is a formal united front at all realistic. I am thinking of a movement that might well be formed without the Communists, yet would not hesitate to absorb those present and former participants who understand their real choices, and have learned something the hard way. Such a movement would have to come from significant sections of American labor. It would insist on a legal status in the established forums of political debate; it would be educational by stimulating controversy within itself and seeking it with others; it could not be an "action organization" but ought to cut across the existing ones by which liberal and progressive causes are now being advanced.

The potential is there, but I do not see its sponsors. Do they exist in the Automobile Workers, among the unionists of Chicago, among the West Coast longshoremen and warehousemen? Are there Socialist-minded members of the ADA to whom such a body has validity? Will the former Wallace supporters be reactivated? Are there churchmen and scientists and educators prepared to join with unionists on such a meeting ground? So far, I see only that many vested interests are blocking even preliminary contact. The deeper issue of what the new age of competition with a Socialist world means for America, and what it requires of American radicals, has not even been broached.

Let us be frank enough to admit to one another that liberals and progressives have themselves shared in ostracizing Marxists of many kinds and affiliations. The "guilt of dissociation" which Milton Mayer described so poignantly in the *Progressive* last autumn still prevails. Granted the heavy responsibility of Communists, past and present, it is a fact that hardly a liberal journal discusses the party as an objective reality, or seeks to re-establish a market place of opinion in which a Marxist view is included. Consider the *Reporter's* recent symposium on the future of liberalism, or the *New Republic's* special supplement on post-Stalin communism, of the *Progressive's* round table last year on the Quaker report: none of them recognize a Marxist place in the political spectrum. Thus far, only the venerables — Norman Thomas and A. J. Muste — have taken their arguments directly to the Communists while preoccupying themselves with a dilemma for which they acknowledge some responsibility. My own experience is that it is easier to have personal and intellectual contact with conservatives than with liberals.

Is there a meeting ground? I doubt whether it can be found in the lamentation of how fine everything would have been had the American Communists never existed, or in making believe none exist now while urging them to dissolve. They need to be replaced and absorbed, a process that requires, if not mutual aid, then at least the inter-action of many sectors of the Left. Where are the men and women of vision, far-sighted and big enough to take the initiative for that?

JOSEPH R. STAROBIN

New York

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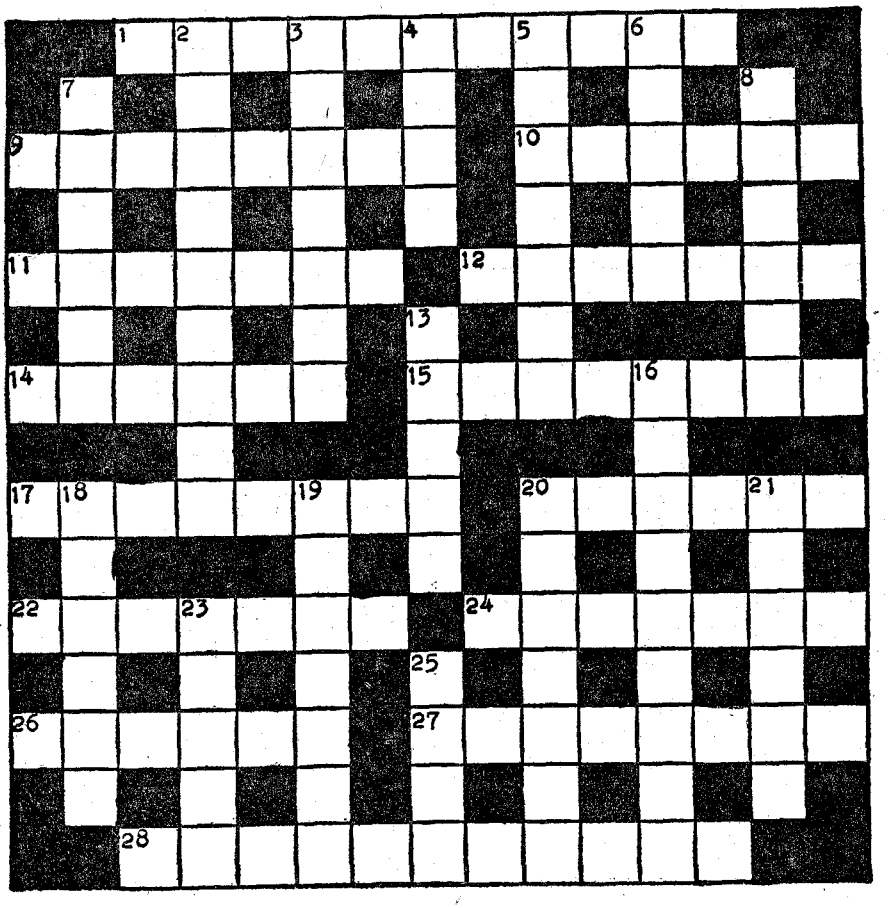
Crossword Puzzle No. 686

By FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS:

1 If your first is last by the facts, you should be in good shape, but this isn't. (11)
9 Pleasant home with poor building material in it, perhaps. (8)
10 Notice in the theater how dark it might be? (6)
11 Such treatment implies they are about equal, looking at it one way. (7)
12 Play up one's appearance as being less peaked. (7)
14 A measure of sheer refusal on the part of one. (6)
15 How greed played an important part in the Normandy campaign. (8)
17 One who puts his money in, or just besieges? (8)
20 Does it take a constellation to be so? (6)
22 A very short drink, perhaps, to distribute around one side of the room. (7)
24 Cheese insect, in short. (7)
26 The bar to respiration. (6)
27 Voltaic. (8)
28 It's difficult to listen to Edward when he's so unfeeling. (4-7)

DOWN:

2 Sap. (9)
3 See 13 down
4 Take 8 and look out for this farmer—he sounds rude. (4)
5 The players went first and made a defensive move. (7)
6 Raise up. (5)
7 A mess of a meal—that is, in the club. (6)
8 Dance jacket. (6)
13 and 3 down Somewhat lower in the social world than a coupon-clipper. (5-7)
16 It's clear it has one extra "e". (9)
18 Not an old repository of law in the city. (6)
19 What gears might be, and do to the shift. (7)
20 In "A Policeman's Lot" he is enterprising. (7)
21 A relic of the kitchen, perhaps. (6)
23 Probably a domesticated variety of the guanaco. (5)
25 Is this the League's main trouble? (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 685

ACROSS: 1 MESQUITE; 5 AND 26 OLIVER CROMWELL; 9 TRAINEE; 10 HAIR NET; 11 ENLARGE; 12 VOLTAGE; 13 STEERING WHEEL; 15 DISEMBODIMENT; 21 CAMELOT; 22 INCLINE; 23 TWOSOME; 24 FLATTEN; 25 DRESSY. DOWN: 2 STAPLES; 3 UNNERVE; 4 AND 1 THE HEART OF THE MATTER; 6 LAID LOW; 7 VANTAGE; 8 ROTTENLY; 10 AND 16 HAVING IT IN FOR SOMEONE; 14 EDUCATED; 17 MELLOWS; 18 EXCLAIM; 19 THISTLE; 20 KERNEL.

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